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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SEOUL 02758 211029Z

50 S
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 H-02 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 INR-07 /040 W
---------- 102606
R 210835Z APR 75
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9590

S E C R E T SEOUL 2758

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP FRASER
SUBJECT: FRASER VISIT

REF: MEMCON DATED 3/31/75

1. DURING PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR AND ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CHONG IL-KWON APRIL 18, DCM ASKED CHONG ABOUT BASIS FOR HIS EARLIER STATEMENT TO CONGRESSMAN FRASER (SEE REF) REGARDING PRESENCE OF TWO MILLION COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS IN ROK. DCM COMMENTED THAT HE WAS PUZZLED BY THIS STATEMENT SINCE IT FIRST FIGURE OF ITS SIZE HE HAD EVER HEARD CITED BY KNOWLEDGABLE KOREAN OFFICIAL.

2. CHONG SAID THAT THE FIGURE WAS NOT NEW. KCIA HAD USED SAME FIGURE IN BRIEFING HIM ON PROBABLE NUMBER OF COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS IN ROKG FOR NUMER OF YEARS, DATING BACK TO PERIOD WHEN HE HAD SERVED AS PRIME MINISTER. CHONG WAS UNABLE TO STATE, HOWEVER, WHERE ALLEGED COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS WERE CONCENTRATED. HE SAID THAT THEY WERE COMPOSED PRIMARILY OF MEMBERS OF FAMILIES WHICH HAD BEEN ROUGHLY HANDLED BY ROKG PRIOR TO AND DURING KOREAN WAR.

3. COMMENT: CHONG IS ONLY KOREAN WE KNOW OF WHO HAS CITED FIGURE OF ANYTHING LIKE THIS MAGNITUDE FOR COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS, AND HE HAS NEVER USED IT BEFORE FRASER VISIT TO OUR KNOWLEDGE. WE ARE CHECKING TO SEE WHETHER FIGURE
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HAS IN FACT ANY OFFICIAL STANDING WITHIN THE ROKG AND

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INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT DURING HIS
FORTHCOMING WASHINGTON VISIT CHONG WILL
ATTEMPT TO USE THIS FIGURE AS HE DID WITH CONGRESSMAN
FRASER TO JUSTIFY NEED FOR FIRM DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONTROLS
IN ROKG. POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH USE COULD BACK-FIRE IS
OBVIOUS AND WE HAVE POINTED THIS OUT TO CHONG.
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